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## Library Collection Development Policy

### Policy

This policy outlines the principles that guide the Washington County Library in selection, maintenance, challenges to, and reconsideration of library materials. It ensures a diverse and inclusive collection that supports the educational, informational, and recreational needs of all residents in our community.

### Definitions

- **Collection:** A comprehensive assortment of library materials, including physical objects and digital resources, provided for community use. The collection encompasses a diverse range of formats and content types, catering to various needs and interests.
- **Reconsideration:** A formal process initiated by a Washington County Library patron to request a review of the library's decision regarding any resource, service, or activity. This includes, but is not limited to, materials, programs, displays and digital content.

### Guidelines

The library will manage a collection of materials to build an inclusive and relevant resource for the community. The management of the library collection will be conducted in accordance with the rules outlined in Minn Stat. § 134.51.

- A. **Selection Criteria:** Librarians select materials based on professional guidelines, authoritative reviews, and a combination of the following criteria:
  - a. **Content:** Accuracy, currency, diversity of perspectives, and relevance to the community.
  - b. **Quality:** Relevant professional reviews, authoritativeness, and originality of the work with preference given to human-generated content.
  - c. **Practicality:** Cost-effectiveness, durability, availability, and format suitability.
  - d. **Demand:** Usage statistics and community interest.
  - e. **Local Focus:** Materials related to local history or created by local authors.
- B. **Community Engagement:** The library welcomes suggestions for new materials, which can be made in library branches or online. Recommendations will be evaluated, using established selection criteria.
- C. **Accessibility:** The library is committed to making the collection as accessible as possible. The Library offers a variety of formats to serve all users and actively seeks new ways to improve the accessibility of its collection.

- D. **Emerging Formats and Materials:** The library stays informed about emerging formats and technologies, planning for collection growth and acquiring materials in new formats as resources allow. Decisions to acquire or retain formats are made after evaluating current and potential use; effectiveness in communicating content; and projected durability.
- E. **Selection Responsibility:** Ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director, who delegates authority to staff for day-to-day management of specific collection areas. As outlined in Minn Stat. § 134.51, “All acquisitions whether purchased or donated will be considered by a licensed library media specialist under Minnesota Rules, part 8710.4550; an individual with a master’s degree in library science or library and information science; or a professional librarian or person trained in library collection management.”
- F. **Material Donations:** The library accepts donations of materials that meet established selection criteria. Donated material becomes the property of the library and will be added to the collection or disposed of solely at its discretion.
- G. **Cataloging and Material Placement:** Materials are cataloged and placed within the collection based on established standards determined by library staff to ensure consistency and ease of access by the intended audience.
- H. **Material Deselection:** The library regularly reviews the collection to remove outdated, damaged, or low-demand materials and formats. Materials that are removed from the library collection are repurposed or reused if possible. The library bases its deselection decisions on the factors used for selection, as well as the need to maintain adequate shelf space.
- I. **Intellectual Freedom:** The library serves all members of the community by providing access to the ideas and information they seek. It therefore adopts a philosophy to not curtail what an individual chooses to read, see, or hear. Further, it adopts the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statements as part of this philosophy.
- J. **Children’s Reading:** Parents or guardians are responsible for choosing library materials that are appropriate for their children. They are encouraged to help their children explore different materials and resources, and to guide their choices based on their individual values. Materials and resources in the library will not be restricted by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children.
- K. **Reconsideration of Library Materials:** The library strives to meet the needs of the entire community and recognizes some materials may be considered controversial. The selection of materials is not based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the principles outlined in this document and the Library Bill of Rights. If a resident of Washington County has concerns about a material, resource, or service offered by the library they may initiate a reconsideration process by completing a Request for Reconsideration form.

- a. The Library complies with Minn Stat. § 134.51, which states “A public library must not ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to a book or other material based solely on its viewpoint or the messages, ideas, or opinions it conveys.”
- b. Residents of Washington County may request the reconsideration of any title, resource, or service with the following limitations:
  - i. A single title, resource, or service will only be reconsidered once every 3 years.
  - ii. A single patron may not have more than 3 active reconsideration requests ongoing at a time.
  - iii. Each title, resource, or service requires a separate completed Request for Reconsideration form. Each request will be handled independently from all other ongoing reconsiderations.
- c. Materials undergoing a request for reconsideration process will remain available during that process.
- d. Completed Request for Reconsideration forms are public record.
- e. The Library shall maintain a Material Review Committee of employees appointed by the Library Director to provide an initial response to any reconsideration requests. The committee’s chair must be “an individual with a master’s degree in library science or library and information science; or a professional librarian or a person trained in library collection management” as required in Minn Stat. § 134.51.
- f. Within 20 business days of receiving a completed Request for Reconsideration, the Material Review Committee will convene and issue a recommendation regarding the request to the Library Director. This initial recommendation shall consider the requestor’s challenge based on Library objectives, general selection criteria, content selection criteria, and guidelines found in the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement.
- g. Upon receiving the Material Review Committee’s initial response, the Library Director will issue a decision on the challenged material within 15 business days and notify the individual who made the request.
- h. Individuals may appeal the Director’s decision to the Library Board. Appeals must be made in writing to the Library Board within 20 business days of the decision being issued.
- i. The Library Board will provide a hearing for any appeals at a regularly scheduled Board meeting and will render a final decision on reconsideration at that meeting. This decision is final and may not be appealed.
- j. Copies of the submitted Request for Reconsideration form and the initial recommendation from the Material Review Committee will be provided to the Library Board as part of the meeting packet.

- k. Upon the completion of any request for reconsideration process the Library Board will submit a report summarizing the reconsideration process and outcome to the Minnesota Education Commissioner.

### **Responsibility**

- A. **Library Director:** Has ultimate responsibility over collection development and delegates collection related responsibility.
- B. **Library Staff:** Selects materials based on established criteria and participates in collection development.
- C. **Material Review Committee:** Provides initial response to requests for reconsideration.
- D. **Library Board:** Upholds intellectual freedom principles, makes final decisions on reconsideration appeals, and submits report on requests for reconsideration to the Minnesota Education Commissioner.

### **Source**

[Library Bill of Rights](#)

[Freedom to Read Statement](#)

[Freedom to View Statement](#)

[Minn Stat. 134.51](#)

[Washington County Library Policies Resolution 2013-138](#)

Board Action, November 24, 2024